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**An unconventional sect —**

# Scientologists range far on their missions

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The Church of Scientology's Guardian Office has been described as everything from an administrative arm of the church to an intelligence unit that conducts covert operations.

In fact, it's a little of both.

Scientology efforts to improve treatment of mental patients and to treat drug addicts through the Narconon program are performed under the banner of the Guardian Office.

So are Scientology's efforts to expose corruption in the Internal Revenue Service and other federal agencies.

But so are Scientology's undercover investigations that most recently resulted in the criminal conspiracy convictions of nine church members in Washington.

And so are covert intelligence gathering and harassment campaigns against foes of Scientology, its alleged victims claim.

The Guardian Office was established in 1966 to "guard" routine church activities from litigation, criticism and upheaval.

It includes the church's public relations, investigations, legal, finance and service bureaus and all of the church's reform groups.

The Citizen's Commission on Human Rights, for example, worked hard two years ago to get informed-consent laws passed in Colorado to prevent unnecessary use of electro-shock treatments and abuse of mental patients.

Other groups include the Gerus Society for the rights of the aged, the Task Force on Mental Retardation, the Committee to Reinstate Ex-Offenders, the Committee on Public Health and Safety, Narconon and several educational programs.

Most of the reform groups are involved in investigating government agencies or groups such as organized medicine that have attacked Scientology.

In the early 1970s, the church launched its secret "Snow White" project, whose aim was to uncover cases of government corruption and purge "false files" about Scientology in government agencies.

In 1978, after the FBI seized massive amounts of church files for the conspiracy case in Washington which included information about the project, "Snow White" went public and became the American Citizens for Honesty in Government.

Among other things, last year the group offered a \$10,000 bounty to whistleblowers who came forward to the church with information of government corruption. No awards have been made.

Last year the group was instrumental in getting the Army to order medical evaluations of soldiers who unknowingly had been given the experimental drug "BZ" during the 1960s. The Army was studying the drug as an enemy incapacitating agent.

Members of the church's National Commission on Law Enforcement and Social Justice began an investigation of the international police organization Interpol after the church learned Interpol was circulating documents about Scientology.

In the mid-1970s, they testified before a series of congressional investigations of Interpol which came after the group obtained documents showing that former Nazi Secret Service officers have served as heads of Interpol and that some of its officials were trafficking in narcotics.

The church pressed for an end to U.S. involvement in the Paris-based police agency and was making charges that the Justice Department and Federal Bureau of Investigation were trying to cover up Interpol's drug activities at the time of the 1977 raid.

Founder L. Ron Hubbard and Scientology have long talked of a conspiracy by the World Mental Health Association and various law enforcement arms of government such as the FBI and the Central Intelligence Agency to do away with the religion.

Some observers reject the conspiracy theory as a paranoid fantasy.

But the files kept on the church, the Food and Drug Administration's suit on the use of the E-Meter, the number of undercover agents used to get information on the church and the repeated raids by the FBI and other agencies lend some credence to this view.

In 1974 the church sued a dozen government agencies charging that they were conspiring to destroy the church. In 1978 that suit and several others were combined, and the action is still pending in Washington.

If the church is being persecuted, the question in many minds is whether the persecution has been provoked by church activities.

British Sociologist Roy Wallis, in his book "Sectarianism" — one of the few works about Scientology that isn't markedly biased pro or con — theorizes that the original deviation of Scientology from conventional religious practice led to hostile societal reaction which in turn led the

movement to adopt strategies of defense and attack toward its detractors. This, he says, confirmed society's initial conclusion that Scientology was wicked, fraudulent or both.

Trying to determine whether attacks on Scientology preceded the religion's own attacks is a little like tackling the riddle of the chicken and the egg.

Scientologists say that their aggressive activities evolved only after the government began to help other groups that wanted Scientology to fail.

As government agents have infiltrated Scientology, so have Scientologists infiltrated government agencies and alleged "enemy" organizations such as the American Medical Association and the Better Business Bureau.

In 1975, Scientology embarrassed its nemesis, the AMA, by planting several agents in AMA offices in Chicago and Washington.

Dubbed "Sore Throat" by the media, the informants leaked documents which revealed the AMA's financial ties with the pharmaceutical industry, AMA lobbying for nominees for federal appointments, a Secret AMA effort to defeat a generic-drug bill in 1970 which it supported and evidence that the AMA falsified records to get lower postal rates for its publications.

Although these revelations were investigated by the IRS, the Post Office, the Federal Election Commission and congressional committees, no charges were leveled against the AMA.

The nine Scientologists convicted of conspiracy last year were charged with stealing copies of files concerning Scientology from Interpol, bugging the general counsel's office of the IRS to monitor a meeting on the church's tax-exempt status, and infiltrating the Justice Department, Internal Revenue Service, Drug Enforcement Administration and the Coast Guard to gain access to documents on the church.

Scientologists say government intelligence agencies have been behind or involved in most of the church's problems.

The earliest documents they produce to prove this both originate from the Air Force office of special investigations at Lowry Air Force Base.

One, dated 1951, concerns an investigation of the short-lived Allied Scientists of the World, which Hubbard founded and was headquartered in Denver during its brief existence. The letter requests the Denver office determine "whether or not this organization has an interest inimical to those of the U.S."

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In 1954, another Air Force investigation was ordered to find out whether Dianetics Inc. in Colorado Springs was composed of "homosexuals, communists or both." The report said it found "no positive information of homosexual activities, subversive beliefs or activities by members of organization" and said no information could be found to substantiate the allegations.

What is considered the most damaging of a number of similar files was the "Foley Memorandum," written by Labor Department investigator Shirley Foley in 1967 based on information obtained from the Internal Revenue Service.

His report read in part, "There is evidence that LSD and perhaps other drugs are widely used by members while assembled. There is evidence that an initiation ceremony is held for all new members at which time an electric shock is administered to them. There is evidence that members of several families in different parts of the U.S. have been shot, but not killed, by unknown persons because they have objected to their teenage children becoming members."

Whatever else may be said of Scientology, these statements are inaccurate. Scientology totally opposes any drug use by its members and even frowns on the use of aspirin. Hubbard has railed against the use of electric shock in all his writings, and Scientology is in the forefront of a movement to do away with shock treatments altogether.

In 1975, the Department of Labor acknowledged that "the Foley memorandum contained unverified and questionable data," was "irrelevant, unverified and based on hearsay . . . and should be destroyed."

However, statements from the Foley memo continued to crop up in other government files long after 1967, when it was written, and after 1975, when the Labor Department agreed to have all references to it in government records expunged.

As "proof" of the conspiracy against Scientology, the church has produced an affidavit by a retired Air Force colonel who worked daily with the CIA in the Office of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and the Defense Department from 1955 to 1963.

In his affidavit, L. Fletcher Prouty attests that his investigation into intelligence reports about Scientology convinced him that "there has been a definite campaign of harassment against this organization for nearly 30 years and this campaign has been directed from a central core and utilized the capabilities of the intelligence community to carry out the attacks."

"The primary means for creating opposition to the Scientology movement has been through the dissemination of false and derogatory information around the world so as to create a climate in which adverse action would be taken against the church and its members."

"It is my view that the sole intent of the campaign is to destroy the movement primarily through the use of a mammoth dossier system. Intelligence agencies are a willing tool and they are a very proficient tool."

Prouty said the documents convinced him that the CIA had played a major role in the Australian inquiry into Scientology. "It appears they created it in the first place in order to use it subsequently to incite similar activities in other countries such as South Africa and England," he said.

Prouty said copies of intelligence messages about Scientology activities throughout the world were frequently routed to the state department, National Security Agency, Army, Navy, and defense department's Office of Special Operations, and that the CIA routinely received 16 copies of each message.

"This is a very rare order of distribution for messages of this type and indicates a very high classification and security handling of what is otherwise unclassified information," Prouty said. "This leads me to believe that the government is hiding its activities behind a cloak of secrecy rather than using secrecy in the normal context to protect the body of the message."

Prouty told the News in a telephone interview that he isn't a Scientologist.

Prouty was the Pentagon's chief briefing officer assigned to the White House during the Eisenhower administration and worked closely with CIA Director Allen Dulles in coordinating military support for the clandestine political operations undertaken by the agency. He wrote a book, "The Secret Team," about the intelligence community, particularly the interplay between Allen Dulles and brother John Foster Dulles who was Secretary of State at the time.

Prouty said he was asked by the Scientologists to give his professional opinion of the government's files on the church.

"It is quite an astounding thing. I'd never seen anything like this before, this kind of intense effort without an explanation. It wasn't a casual effort. It was a concentrated effort."

Prouty declined to speculate on who is behind the alleged conspiracy. "But the CIA and the FBI don't originate things," he said. "They're generally an errand boy. They do somebody else's job. What motivates them is generally an outside motivation."

In his affidavit, Prouty observed that the AMA was the prime mover behind the Food and Drug Administration's legal action against Scientology.

Prouty doubts reports of the dark side of Scientology. "I've gone out of my way with contacts throughout the world to attempt to find out if allegations against the church were ever substantiated and I've not been able to find any case where it's been proven they harmed anyone," he told the News. "I've never run into anybody connected with the organization that didn't seem to me to be a pretty sharp type. Whatever it is they do, it seems to be rather beneficial to them."

As for the recent criminal charges, Prouty said, "The government's big case against Scientology amounted to being accused of using a Xerox machine without authorization."

Prouty said he thinks Scientology's problems aren't much different from those experienced by Mormons and Christian Scientists in the past.

But Scientology certainly is more militant in responding to criticism than other religions. At one time, Scientologists were expected to "disconnect" from friends and relatives who disapproved of the church. Such persons are known as "suppressive persons" or enemies of the church.

Another controversial policy revolves around the term "fair game." "Suppressive persons" could be "deprived of property or injured by any means by any Scientologist without discipline of the Scientologist," Hubbard declared. "They may be tricked, sued or lied to or destroyed."

Both policies were canceled in 1968 by Hubbard, who said, "It causes bad public relations." Scientologists claim "fair game" meant only that Scientologists expelled by the church for ethical reasons no longer were protected by an internal system of justice.

Most policy letters issued during the past few years have little to do with handling enemies, instead emphasizing the sales of Scientology books and services.

This focus on money is why the IRS says it has challenged Scientology's tax-exempt status over the years.

Although the church calls its expensive fees for auditing (about \$200 an hour) and other services "donations," the IRS argues that this amounts to selling a product and that the organization is primarily a business.

Scientology defends its fees by noting that no one blinks at the huge contributions or tithes made by Catholics, Mormons or members of other religions.

Some courts have ruled that Scientology is a bona fide religion, but the controversy wages on. All churches except those under the Los Angeles headquarters, which includes the complex in Clearwater, Fla., have tax-exempt status. Even so, the IRS periodically challenges the churches' tax returns, and some members are challenged by the IRS when they try to deduct church donations.

For example, the Denver church has filed suit in U.S. District Court over the IRS seizure of a church bank account in a disagreement over taxes that appears to have resulted when the church mistakenly filed a form for non-exempt organizations.

The IRS refuses to comment on its relations with the church, saying it can't discuss taxpayer records with the public.

Meanwhile, the church has issued a steady stream of news releases attacking IRS operations.

It's clear from IRS records that the church was singled out for special scrutiny. The IRS has written policies and forms specifically for dealing with Scientology organizations.

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The church's bugging of an IRS meeting on the church's tax-exempt status in 1974 revealed that the agency was considering rewriting its regulations on tax-exempt churches to exclude the Church of Scientology.

The church also made much of the fact that it was named on an "IRS enemies list" compiled of 99 groups singled out for special investigation by the IRS Special Services Staff during the Nixon years.

The list included the National Council of Churches, the Urban League and various civil rights groups.

Church officials also speculate that former President Richard Nixon may be behind some of their broader government problems and say documents released with Nixon's presidential papers prove this.

In 1958, Hubbard apparently evoked the wrath of the then vice president by publicly referring to Nixon's views on psychotherapy.

Soon after, two Secret Service agents visited the founding church in Washington and ordered the church to cease any mention of Nixon's name. According to a bulletin Hubbard wrote in 1960, the agents stated that they were there under Nixon's express orders and that "they daily had to make such calls on 'lots of poeople' to prevent Nixon's name from being used in ways Nixon disliked."

Citing freedom of speech and other arguments, Hubbard issued the bulletin to urge church members not to vote for Nixon, noting that his own agents told the church that Nixon believed in nothing the founding church or Scientology stood for.

"We want clean hands in public office in the U.S.," Hubbard wrote. "Let's begin by doggedly denying Nixon the presidency no matter what his Secret Service tries to do to us now in Washington."

Church spokesman Vaughn Young observes that the church's problems with the IRS in particular accelerated after Nixon finally was elected in 1968.

The founding church was recognized as tax exempt in 1956 but had its status revoked in 1958. The New York church's status was revoked in 1967, a month before the trial on the status of the founding church. A month later, California lost its tax-exempt status, followed by Florida in 1969, Hawaii in 1970 and Michigan in 1971.

The church acknowledges its wealth, although saying that none of the money goes directly to Hubbard and that most is spent in administration of the huge organization and to carry on lawsuits.

Much of the church's wealth is tied up in real estate to house the burgeoning "Orgs." In 1976, the church paid \$5.5 million cash for the Cedars of Lebanon hospital in Los Angeles, which is the location of Scientology's U.S. headquarters.

In October, the Denver church paid \$1.3 million in cash for the Sachs-Lawlor building at 18th and Lawrence streets, having outgrown its home at 375 S. Navajo St. However, Michael Graves, a Denver spokesman for the church, said this building required too much renovation, so it has been sold and the church is looking for another location for its regional headquarters.

Hubbard writes that people who criticize the cost of Scientology are "suppressive persons" who know "if we don't charge, we will vanish."

But if Scientology is the answer to the ills of mankind and if the goal is, as once stated, to "clear the planet," one might ask why the church doesn't offer it freely or at a lesser cost.

Hubbard responds that to do so "rewards non-producers the same as producers. A pre-clear who can work and produces as a member of society deserves priority. Welfare money degrades because it is not exchanged for delivered production. If you reward nonproduction, you get it." Elsewhere he states that Scientology will fail to expand if it fails to expand the abilities of the able.